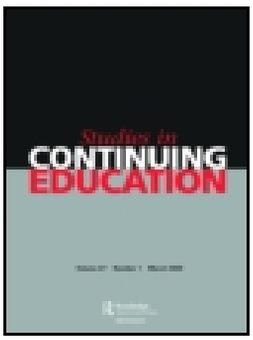

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Becoming an emotional worker and student: exploring skin and spa therapy education and training

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ABSTRACT

This study connects to the term 'emotional labour', coined by [Hochschild, A. R. (1983) 2003. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. 2nd ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press], and explores how skin and spa therapy students are constructed as emotional workers in learning processes surrounding the body. Drawing on a poststructural approach, inspired by Foucault, regularities of description and self-description were analysed in the material, which consist of interviews and field notes derived from observations of classroom interaction. The results show how student subjectivities are produced as a response to the presumption about body availability in the educational arrangements. It also shows how students are positioned and position themselves as emotional workers through three reoccurring issues surrounding the body; the body as a private sphere, the body as a place of pain, and disgusting peculiarities of the body. Here, struggling subjectivities emerge, striving to overcome the obstacles that the body might entail in becoming a professional. The participants self-position and are positioned as responsible concerning each other's' learning processes, making their bodies available for their classmates to practice on, communicating their thoughts and feelings as posing clients, developing their empathic abilities towards future clients. Thus, the participants are not only produced as emotional workers, but emotional students, pinpointing the necessity of educational research on emotional labour.

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Introduction

A student posing as a skin and spa therapist takes out the nail cutter and says: 'Oh my god this is creepy – I've never done this before, what if I cut off your toes!' *The student posing as a customer laughs and says (ironically):* 'Exactly what you want to hear from your therapist.' - During a practical lesson in pedicure.

In skin and spa therapy education and training, students learn to handle their own feelings in a range of ways and through these processes they are produced as emotional

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workers. They learn how to handle their feelings towards the treatments they are expected to perform in their training and future working life, and their feelings towards the treatments they are expected to make themselves available to receive as part of their training. These aspects of vocational learning connect to the term 'emotional labour' coined by Hochschild (2003) in her study on American flight attendants. Emotional labour is here defined as 'the management of feeling to create a publically observable facial and bodily display', which 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 2003, 7). It is the process of managing feelings and expressions in order to fulfil emotional requirements as part of the job role (Grandey 2000; Hochschild 2003). More specifically, workers are expected to regulate their emotions during interactions with clients, co-workers and superiors, and affect the specific emotional impact required for the particular organisation. As Hochschild (2003) exemplifies, flight attendants must make passengers feel safe and at ease, and a bill collector must intimidate. Both however are performing emotional labour.

In Hochschild's study, her quest was to 'uncover the heart of emotional labour, to understand what it takes to do it and what it does to people' (Hochschild 2003, 10). This study has then inspired many scholars that have applied emotional labour to various professional and vocational settings, analysed it along numerous dimensions, including, as Steinberg and Figart (1999, 12 f) show, the examination of; (i) the impact that performing emotional labour has on employee's' well-being; (ii) emotional labour as a dimension of organisational behaviour and effectiveness; and, (iii) the invisibility of emotional labour as a job requirement and the extent to which it is remunerated. A large part of the workplaces wherein emotional labour has been problematised are located in the service industry (Brotheridge and Grandey 2002; Seymour 2000; Totterdell and Holman 2003) and in health services (Allan 2005; Smith and Lorentzon 2008). There are a few studies focussing on emotional labour in the beauty industry; Black and Sharma (2001b) have shown, in their study on beauty therapists in the UK, how beauty workers are involved in complex processes of emotional labour; and, Toerien and Kitzinger (2007) demonstrates the interactional skills required for emotional labour to be performed in the beauty salon. However, studies on emotional labour – in the beauty industry and other places – have mainly been directed towards emotional labour in worklife. When it comes to educational research, research on emotional labour has for the most part been conducted in relation to the emotional labour of teachers (Chin and Warren 2016; Chowdhry 2014; Vincent and Braun 2013). There are some studies within vocational education research that focuses on emotional labour in relation to various vocations (see e.g. Colley 2006; Msiska, Smith, and Fawcett 2014). Bredlöv (2016b) examines emotional labour briefly in a study about how skin and spa therapy students are produced as professionals, where a caring knowledge is shown to play a significant role. Overall, the processes through which students in vocational education and training develop their ability to perform emotional labour remains remarkably unexplored.

From an educational perspective it is important to unmask aspects of emotional labour in processes of vocational learning since emotional labour often is tacit and unacknowledged, but a crucial aspect for operating successfully in many vocations. Both men and women perform emotional labour, but women are expected to manage their feelings better and more often (Hochschild 2003, 164). In Vocational Education and Training

(VET), women do a large percentage of the care and service work – work that entail a great deal of emotional labour. This emotional labour has often been unacknowledged, though it has been reduced as skills natural for women – skills that they automatically gain in their experience of being female (Nay and Garratt 2002). Therefore, research on emotional labour is also particularly important to deepen the knowledge about how gendered processes are at play in the learning of emotional labour in strongly femininised settings. Workers in the beauty industry – an industry dominated by women – are expected to manage more or less intimate client relations and are involved in complex processes of service and care work.

As a part of a broader study on processes of becoming in beauty education (see Bredlöv 2016a, 2016b; Linder Eknor 2017), this study examines emotional labour in skin and spa therapy education, drawing on Foucault (1980, 1982, 1988, 1990, 1993) and Butler (1990, 1997). In order to acknowledge the educational setting and the learning processes taking place here, I chose a rather different theorisation than most research on emotional labour. Most research on emotional labour stems from Hochschild's definition, where Bourdieu and Goffman inspired her theorisation. Hochschild mainly posed questions about what it takes to perform emotional labour and what it does to the people performing it. My quest in this is not to explore how my participants actually feel in various situations or how these emotions, and their management of them, affect their ability to perform their work, learn new skills or their satisfaction at the end of the day. Instead, emotional expressions, gestures, facial expression, tone of voice as well as feelings are viewed as discursively produced, which allow me to scrutinise how power operates in processes of becoming an emotional worker. This puts focus on learning processes and that which make them possible, or even desirable, allowing me to make visible how the educational arrangements enact processes of becoming an emotional worker. Such processes need to be outlined properly in order to develop strategies for education and training to prepare students for the labour market and working life in a particular vocation. In order to identify emotional labour in skin and spa therapy education and training *specifically*, given the nature of this vocational sphere, focus is directed towards learning processes surrounding the body. Thus, the aim of this study is to explore how skin and spa therapy students are positioned and position themselves as emotional workers in learning processes surrounding the body.

The beauty industry and VET

Beauty work is often perceived as low-status work and this cannot be separated from the gendered, femininised, nature of the industry (see e.g. Black 2004, 45). The work being performed here is to a great extent guided by dominating ideals of femininity (Scranton 2001; Gimlin 1996), even if beauty products in the last years more often have been connected to a commercialisation of masculinity (Edwards 1997; Nordberg 2005). However, 'men are not required to paint, moisturise, deodorise, and dehair their bodies in order to appear masculine.' (Black and Sharma 2001a, 101), activities that are actually forming the day to day routines of femininity (Holland et al. 1994).

Most of the vocational education in Sweden can be found within the upper secondary school, which students that have completed compulsory school can attend at no cost. It is not mandatory, but about 99% start, and 27% choose to attend vocational programmes.

There is also vocational education at post-secondary level – Higher Vocational Education, which is available for adults that have completed upper secondary school. This is regulated on a national level and free of charge, with a possibility of receiving financial aid for studies. Additionally, there are private alternatives, and when it comes to education for the beauty business, privately run schools are by far the dominating form of education. Here, marketisation and competition between adult educational providers have emerged here to a great extent. There is a plurality of stakeholders operating in a free market, where there are no formal study plans or national guidelines since education within this field is unregulated. There are however a number of larger educational providers connected to trade organisations that are said to oversee the school activities. More often than not, the educational providers cooperate with different types of beauty businesses, where the owners of a school also run for example a spa, salon, product brand or agency for workers in the field. Thus, the educational sphere in the beauty industry is closely linked to, or even a part of, its economic sector.

This study focuses upon training programmes in skin and spa therapy, which includes all practices, in varying levels of detail, that are united in Statistics Sweden's[1] definition of 'beauty treatments.' This includes spa treatments, skin therapy, practices in beauty salons and nail salons, makeup and hair styling. The subjects in training programmes for skin and spa therapy are: Anatomy, physiology, dermatology, chemistry, economy, hair removal, facial care, body care, makeup, manicure, pedicure, advanced skin care and spa. The training also entails work in the school salon and spa; handling client relations, performing treatments and selling products. Education and training programmes in skin and spa therapy cost 85,000–1,00,000 SEK for one to one and half years of training. The labour market for skin and spa therapists contains at spas, health resorts, cruise ships, salons and makeup companies, including physical labour and emotional labour. It is also not uncommon as a skin and spa therapist to work in stores for skin care and make up or in the beauty sections of department stores.

A large part of skin and spa therapy education and training contains of practical lessons, where the students practice treatments such as various types of facial treatments (pore cleansing, chemical and regular peeling etc.), pedicure, manicure, various types of treatments for hair removal (wax, IPL[2], diathermy), various body treatments and make up. These lessons almost always start with the teacher demonstrating the treatment of the day, letting a student pose as a client. Then the students alternate between posing as clients and therapists, and they thereby get to use different products, practice treatments and experience them as a client.

Theoretical approach and material

To understand how students are positioned and position themselves as emotional workers in learning processes surrounding the body, I draw on a poststructural perspective inspired by Michel Foucault (1980, 1982, 1988, 1990, 1993) and Judith Butler (1990, 1997). Such theoretical approach is intertwined with the method. The concepts of power, discourse and subjectivity constitute the toolbox for analysing the material, and will be outlined in the following.

A Foucauldian concept of power differs greatly from how we usually think about power, namely, as something that can be possessed and exercised upon others,

oppressing and constraining (Mills 2003). Foucault's writing is critical to such a notion and, instead, power is understood in terms of a constantly ongoing and ubiquitous production in which we are all involved, operating within everyday relations (Foucault 1980, 1993). It works through us every time we think, act and speak and we hereby become discursively constituted subjects. Such conception on power centralises on the question of *how* power operate, and allow me to make visible how particular processes of becoming are made possible through power when it comes to skin and spa therapy education. Discourse is central to this concept of power and is here viewed as 'practices that systematically form the object of which we speak' (Foucault 1982, 49). These practices can be identified 'because of the systematicity of the ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and behaving which are formed within a particular context, and because of the effects of those ways of thinking and behaving' (Mills 1997, 17). This entails that what can be said and understood is socially, historically and culturally constituted, thus, made possible through discourse, and structures the way that we can perceive reality. The use of Foucauldian resources enables an analysis of how discourses are mobilised in the material, wherein students are produced as emotional workers in particular ways. Accordingly, the body and our feelings are seen as shaped discursively, as products of multiple processes of power (Foucault 1988).

The subject is here seen as decentred and fragmented – allowing the subject to take on numerous positions through discourse, becoming multiple subjectivities, emerging through regularities of description and self-description. This way of viewing the subject differs greatly from the Western way of understanding the subject as autonomous, sovereign and uniform (Kendall and Wickham 1999; Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000). Instead, subjectivities are shaped discursively, and according to Foucault it is what is discursively available to us that enable us to talk and to view others and ourselves in certain ways (Foucault 1990). Here, particular locations in power-knowledge regimes circumscribe the access and decide the frames within which subjectivity positions, positions for skin and spa therapy students to operate as emotional workers in this case, are occupied and offered (Foucault 1980). This approach enables an analysis of regularities of description and self-description – reoccurring ways of positioning oneself that is – providing insight into how people engage with discourse in this micro-context of education and training. Through this theorisation, individuals are not just seen as recipients of power but 'the "place" where power is enacted and the place where it is resisted' (Mills 2003, 35). Through this conception of power, people become both products and producers of discourse (Foucault 1980), and therefore power both acts on the subject and is constituted through it (Butler 1997). As Foucault states, 'there are no relations of power without resistances', and resistances '*are formed right at the point* where relations of power are exercised' (Foucault 1980, 142). Through this way of thinking about power relations, the students' actions are responses, reactions and resistances embedded in shifting relations of power, which makes visible their agency in the learning processes taking place.

Furthermore, in analysing doings of gender, Butler's (1990) notion of performativity provides guidance where she states that processes of doing gender is operationalised by performative acts. Such acts are behaviours of constantly repeating and imitating masculinity and femininity through controlling images. Controlling images of femininity in Western societies are intertwined with the beauty industry, where such images inform

the way that women perform various beauty treatments and consume various products, and how female bodies are produced (see e.g. Linder Eknor 2017).

Empirical material and analysis

The material analysed in this study contains interviews with twenty skin and spa therapy students, and observations in practical lessons in two different schools for skin and spa therapy education and training in Sweden. The staff and students of these schools gave me access to all activities taken place in the school, enabling me to attend and observe lessons, have informal conversations with teachers and conduct interviews with students.

After four weeks of initial, exploratory fieldwork, observations were formally conducted on 16 occasions that lasted for about two to three hours, where I attended lessons in for example pedicure, manicure, various face and spa treatments and make up. Sometimes, when the number of students came to uneven pairs, I was asked to step in and pose as a client, but most often I was an observer that walked around amongst the student pairs, observing interactions between the posing clients and therapists and between teachers and students. Occasionally, I talked to the participants and/or the teacher(s) a little while, or just asked a question or two. The interviews were usually conducted with individual participants, but occasionally, at their own request, I interviewed them in self-selected friendship pairs. There were semi-structured interviews (Kvale 1996) and the questions circled around their vocational choice, what their views are on the school activities and how to become a successful skin and spa therapist.

Following the poststructuralist framework, all forms of meaning production in the material, including the statements of interview participants, and teachers and students in the observed lessons, the spatial context, artefacts, gestures, facial expressions, movements and other bodily doings, occurrences and interactions in the observed lessons, are viewed as text (see e.g. Börjesson 2003; Mills 1997). In this analysis, I wanted to scrutinise the ways that students talk about and handle situations surrounding the body that I could identify as 'sensitive' in some way, where the student(s) for example had to overcome feelings of pain, discomfort or embarrassment. I sought to understand these processes in relation to the process of becoming a professional in this sphere, and therefore I set out to explore how the students are positioned and self-position as emotional workers in learning processes surrounding the body. I focused on how such processes emerge through regularities of description and self-description in the material, and the discourses mobilised in these processes. I read and re-read the material in order to discover recurrences of events (of ways of addressing an issue, ways of talking about oneself and others, or ways of conducting yourself for example). Rather than counting the number of times an identified regularity appears, I focused on how pervasive an identified regularity is and how it relates to the rest of the material and other regularities. I compared groups of regularities, trying to discern the pattern that the regularities produce together. Through this process, a structure for describing these processes then emerged.

A poststructuralist theorisation, inspired by Foucault, has consequences for how one can view knowledge production and the role of the researcher. To describe something totally truthfully is not relevant because there is no reality outside of discourse, and the researcher is viewed here as a part of the discourse he/she is exploring (see e.g. Börjesson and Palmblad 2007). However, one can argue that the discourse allows the

researcher to produce a particular structure, which is a consequence of what is made possible in this historically and culturally specific time and place (Börjesson 2003). Consequently, this produced text is a part of the construction of the phenomenon studied and is at the same time a product of discourse. For the same reason, it is not reasonable to discuss issues relating to quality in terms of validity (since it suggests that there is such a thing as objective and generalisable truth). Quality is nevertheless discussed as *trustworthiness,* which is dependent on the researcher's clarifications and problematisations concerning theorisation, methodology and reflexivity (Börjesson 2003; Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000). The reader can then assess if the argument and the analysis the researcher is making seem reasonable (Howarth 2000), that it has 'capacity to convince' (Dean 1999, 10).

Analysis

The analysis, where regularities of description and self-description are identified, is constructed as follows; first, I briefly show how student subjectivities are constructed as a response to the educational arrangement as a whole, where students' bodies are presumed to be constantly available; second, I show how the students are positioned and position themselves as emotional workers through three reoccurring issues emerging in work surrounding the body. These issues are formulated as 'the body as a private sphere', 'the body as a place of pain', and 'disgusting peculiarities of the body.' The quotes and field notes are selected as exemplars of the regularities of description and self-description identified in the wider analysis. The paper ends with a brief discussion of the main results.

Making yourself available

In this educational arrangement, it is presumed that students are willing to make their bodies available for their classmates to practice treatments on. This presumption is articulated in a document addressed to the students before they start. For example, the students need to validate that they won't remove any of their body hair right before or during their training, so that their classmates can practice different hair removal techniques on their bodies. Even though the students are not legally bound to this document, this is something that students acknowledge when they talk about their experience of the training. One student, Mira, gives her thoughts on this matter during an interview:

Mira:	(…) and we are not really allowed to shave during our training.
Interviewer:	How does that feel?
Mira:	Well, haha, it does not feel that great
Interviewer:	no?
Mira:	yes, when I have to grow my hair …
Interviewer:	Feels a little unusual maybe?
Mira:	Yes, a lot! But it is very useful to get to practice on one another, and at those times it is good with a lot of hair. It is not that great if someone comes to class and just shaved or something. Then you have to do the treatment without getting any result, it is a pity.

Here, the student talks about her negative feelings towards having to let her bodily hair grow, but points out the usefulness of this order of things, where all students do this for the benefit of the collective. In the following quote, another student describes her experience of this educational arrangement:

> Marie: (…) It has been a challenge for me, to really use your own body in that sense. Okay that I get to learn to perform treatments on others, but that your own body constantly have to be available for others to practice on … it is pretty intimate. So, it feels like you have to build up your own little protection in some way.

Here, Marie, describes her experience of the presumption of this educational arrangement that she is engaged in. She positions herself as not fitting into the structure, having to struggle and handle her feelings towards making her body available. Also, in the first quote, the student, Mira, position herself as not adjusting too well to the circumstances of having to let her body hair grow. Although these students acknowledge the purpose, and their own benefit, of this structure, the way that they position themselves can be viewed as resistance, as their response to these circumstances. These examples help us to understand how power operates in these educational arrangements, and explains the multiple (rather than one-way) functions of power (See Jackson and Mazzei 2012). I will continue to show how the student's reactions and responses, and their struggles and resistance, are temporarily embedded within relations of power that shifts and circulates through the activities of the school. However, through these multiple reactions, struggles and acts of resistance, norms about the emotional skin and spa therapy professional are produced. I will show how the students are produced as emotional workers in three reoccurring issues surrounding the body, identified in the material as distinct.

First, in the following section, I will show how 'the body as a private sphere' emerge as such a reoccurring issue.

The body as a private sphere

A regularity that emerges as distinct in the ongoing emotional labour surrounding the body is the body as a private sphere. The following field note is from a practical lesson in body treatment (which entail different practices depending of the client's specific 'deviations'), where the participants are taking turns performing body treatments on each other:

> The body treatment start with the 'therapist' doing an assessment of the 'client's' body, where so called 'deviations' are noted (cellulites, asymmetry, visible blood vessels etc.). During this step, the client stands in front of the therapist in her underwear, in the same room as the rest of the class (that are also performing this task). The student pairs have been practising the whole treatment as a therapist and now it is their turn to pose as clients. One posing therapist, Julia, says to her 'client', Negin, in a jokey manner: 'So, now it is your turn to be naked!' Another 'client', Linda, standing in front of her classmate in her underwear, says to the room, ironically: 'Yeah, this is the best part of this programme!'. A posing therapist, Alma, shouts to a posing client, Maria, across the room (playfully): 'Nice panties Maria!' Maria says, ironically: 'Well that's nice, with everybody watching!' Everybody laughs, looking at Maria and she makes bodybuilder poses to the class' laughter and cheering.

Norms about feelings and reactions regarding one's own nudity emerges here, about being uncomfortable when standing in front of others in your underwear. This can also be connected to wider discourses of femininity, where exposing your body 'too much' can be associated with less respectable femininities. Joking practices emerge here. Linda's response to the social, cultural and material circumstance of having to undress and be scrutinised in front of her classmates, is to ironically joke about really enjoying it. Both Julia and Alma put their respective 'clients' on the spot by addressing their nakedness loudly through joking about it, which can be viewed as a response, or a resistance, to the way that they have been positioned at this moment, namely as professional assessors of their classmates' bodies. Maria, Alma's posing client, reacts to becoming the centre of her classmates' gaze through repositioning herself as a (masculine, bodybuilder) subject that is active, in control and voluntarily exposing herself to the gaze of others, proudly showing off her body (see Butler 1990). She's reacting through repositioning herself, which can be viewed as resistance. The jokey manner, through which these students get through this activity, is constructing these situations as comedic and funny or even bizarre, but it is also what makes them possible to identify as a 'sensitive' situation. It is characterised by its complexity and intimacy, where the professional must perform emotional work.

In the following field note, nudity and exposure becomes an aspect in the learning process constructed as sensitive, and is another example of how the body is produced as a private sphere. It takes place during a teacher demonstration of a spa treatment in front of the class:

> The teacher, Marie, is demonstrating the treatment on a student in front of the class. She talks about towel techniques, which refers to techniques using a towel to cover up parts of the client's body during the treatment. […] Marie says: 'Here on the side (she shows the outside of the breast/the side of the body with a sweeping gesture of the hands) it can happen, it can be so different when it comes to breasts, but sometimes you have to lift them a little and press with the towel so that they don't fall out, so that the client does not feel exposed. And this can be so different – some people just throw themselves on the bed and are totally comfortable to be maybe completely naked, so one really has to assess the situation and adjust accordingly – it should be on the client's terms. Sometimes the therapist can find it unpleasant when someone is very all over the place.'

Here, the issue of nudity and exposure is produced as a situation that can be sensitive both for the therapist and the client. The client might feel exposed and the therapist might feel discomfort when faced with the nudity of a client that is very comfortable with her/his nudity. The teacher, Marie, is through this demonstration 'doing' respectful, considerate and flexible professional skin and spa therapy subjectivity, pointing out that 'it should be on the client's terms.' The eventual unpleasantness of being exposed to clients' bodies is acknowledged and produced as something to be accepted and not noticeable. The work is thereby produced through the emotional labour of dampening and hiding one's eventual feelings of discomfort regarding nudity in order to appear appropriately professional, making the client feel comfortable and safe.

In this section, I have shown how nudity and exposure emerge as sensitive in the material and mobilises a discourse of the body where the body is produced as a private sphere. Joking practices emerge as one coping mechanism, constructing these situations as comedic and harmless. Through joking practices the participants that are

positioned as exposed can re-position themselves as active subjects, reacting to the given circumstance. Also, here, the participants position themselves as enduring and responsible, for their own learning process and the learning processes of their classmates. The skin and spa therapy professional is also positioned as flexible – an example of how professional subjectivities are constructed in the moment, in relation to a client. In the following section, I will show how 'the body as a place of pain' emerges as a regularity, when the students are positioned and self-position as emotional workers through issues surrounding the body.

The body as a place of pain

Physical pain emerges as a reoccurring issue surrounding the body, where students are produced as emotional workers. The following statement is from an interview with a student, Sara, that talks about the pain she has had to endure:

> If I get a mosquito bite that I scratch, I can get a scar for like two years, haha it is crazy. And with diathermy […] there is a small pen where a needle is attached. You are supposed to reach the hair follicle and burn for several seconds, and then the hair is supposed to loosen when you pull it out. I don't feel confident regarding this treatment, I think it is the most difficult of almost everything we are training for, a lot of people find it hard. And then I get to practice on Matilda and if I'm like 'ok I get to take 20 hairs from you and you don't get to practice on me because I think it hurts', I mean, that is not ok. So it has been really hard. I have had a lot of scabs on my legs, because if you reach down to the hair follicle in the wrong angle you get a small burn instead. So it is unpleasant.

Sara describes her experience of partaking in the specific activity of practising and receiving diathermy, positioning herself as particularly vulnerable to this treatment and at the same time in need of performing it on others in order to become professional. Her response, embedded within the cultural, social and material practices of this circumstance, is to make herself/her body available for her classmates to practice on, enduring the pain along with the marks on her skin, taking responsibility for her own and her classmates learning. Her feelings and bodily reactions are here produced as obstacles that she has to endure and/or overcome for becoming a professional skin and spa therapist. This is an example of how physical pain and discomfort emerge as inevitable parts of the training.

As in the quote above, physical pain occasionally emerges in the interviews when students talk about their training and how they are expected to receive the treatments they are training for. However, physical pain mostly emerges in the field notes stemmed from observations of the practical training, of interactions in the classroom. In the following quote, a student makes an ironic remark regarding one painful step in a facial treatment:

> The practical lesson in a specific face treatment has just begun and the students are preparing for practising the treatment on each other. A student lay down in a bed and says, ironically: 'Oh I'm so looking forward to the pore cleansing haha!'. I ask her: 'So you enjoy pore cleansing?' She says: 'Well it is like the most painful, I really need it though, there are a lot to pore out.'

Here, the student's response to the circumstance of having to make her body available, thus vulnerable for physical pain, is to joke/make an ironic remark. Joking practices are something that appears as a regularity in the material and can be seen as a form of

resistance to the given structure, as a reaction to this social, cultural and material practice of making oneself available in this matter. Here, the student produces pore cleansing as 'the most painful.' However, she produces her skin as in need of this practice and therefore the pain is necessary to endure, otherwise her feelings and bodily reactions would become obstacles for achieving the proper skin care.

In this section, I have shown how physical pain emerges in the emotional labour surrounding the body. Here, the body is produced as a place of pain, and therefore a hindrance one has to overcome, producing enduring and docile bodies. Responsible and communicative learning subjects are also produced, taking responsibility for the learning process of one's classmates through these communicative actions and through making one's body available for practice. The participants also position themselves as responsible for their own process of becoming a professional skin and spa therapist, which entails implementing a proper level of skin care, including taking various treatments and purchasing various products. These processes of emotional labour surrounding the body emerges as processes where beauty, normativity and occupational success play a central role. In the following section, I will show how the body as an unpredictable entity, with an ability to evoke discomfort and disgust, emerges as an issue surrounding the body through which the students are positioned and self-position as emotional workers.

Disgusting peculiarities of the body

The third issue surrounding the body that emerges as distinct when students' are positioned and self-position, is discomfort and disgust in relation to bodily occurrences; the peculiarities of certain bodies or being involved in certain situations where practices are being performed on bodies. As in previous sections, enduring and docile subjectivities are produced here. Through this process, feelings of discomfort are normalised, which the following field note is another example of:

> *During a practical lesson in pedicure:*
>
> A student posing as a therapist, Samira, is working on a classmate's, Helen's, foot. She is using a plane to carve out old skin on a duration. Helen makes a face and turns away, looking uncomfortable. I ask her: 'How is it going?' She says: 'No, it is ok, if I don't look directly at it it is fine, it is just that the cutting is a little creepy to look at.' The teacher, whom has overheard the conversation, says: 'It is nothing strange that you feel that way, Helen.'

Here, feelings of discomfort are normalised through the teacher's statement. Helen acknowledges her feelings of discomfort, feelings as hindrances to overcome in order to enable this learning process. At the same time as she constructs this event as a non-problem, easily handled (by looking away). This is another example of how tough, enduring and docile subjectivities are produced in the day-to-day activities in skin and spa therapy education. Tough and enduring subjectivities also emerges in the self-positionings of the students posing as therapists, which the following quote is an example of:

> *During a practical lesson in IPL:*
>
> The task of performing IPL in the armpit for (more or less permanent) hair removal, has been demonstrated on a student by the teacher, and now it is time for one student to practice

> on another. (…) Since the armpit must have been shaved the same day as the IPL treatment is performed, the treatment starts with the posing therapist, Tove, shaving the posing client's, Anna's, armpit. Tove says during this task: 'My god, it is unpleasant to shave somebody else.' The teacher walks over to the group a minute later and says: 'it is really unpleasant to shave somebody else.' Tove: 'I just said the same thing, it is really unpleasant. But that you aren't allowed to show.' She continues, ironically: 'Oh this is so nice/cozy.' The teacher says: 'Yes, like when you get face to face with nail fungus, like, Oh nail fungus, how nice!' Everybody laughs.

Here, encountering unpleasant situations, tasks and bodily occurrences as a skin and spa therapist is normalised and the ability to do this without showing your feelings of discomfort or disgust is produced as a part of becoming a professional. This is here produced as a central aspect in the activities and practices of skin and spa therapy. The ironic remark about enjoying nail fungus is another example of how joking practices emerge in the ongoing emotional labour surrounding the body in the practical training, and a way of reacting to the given circumstance.

In this section, I have shown how general discomfort and disgust emerge in the emotional labour surrounding the body in the practical training, and how these emotional reactions are normalised. The body is produced as a changeable, unpredictable entity with an ability to evoke discomfort and disgust. Like in the previous sections, subjectivities emerge that are responsible, communicative, flexible, docile and enduring. To be able to cope with general discomforts and disgust in relation to bodies, namely overcoming the hindrances that one's feelings can entail, is constructed as a part of the learning process in becoming a professional skin and spa therapist.

Discussion

This study connects to the term 'emotional labour', coined by Hochschild (2003), and the aim was to explore the specifics of skin and spa therapy emotional labour. More specifically, it focused how skin and spa therapy students are constructed as professional (or unprofessional) emotional workers in learning processes surrounding the body, pinpointing the intimate and complex body work taking place within this sphere. Students' (self-)positionings were analysed in the material, which consist of interviews and field notes deriving from observations of classroom interaction. I show how student subjectivity is produced as a response to the presumption about body availability in the educational arrangements. Tough and enduring subjectivities emerge through this process, striving to overcome the obstacles that one's body and one's feelings and reactions might entail in the process of becoming a professional. Three reoccurring issues surrounding the body emerge as such obstacles; the body as a private sphere; the body as a place of pain, and; disgusting peculiarities of the body. In the process of overcoming these obstacles, the participants are produced as responsible for one's own learning process, and to obtain the level of personal skin care that is required for a success within this sphere. However, this fluid and relational field construct multiple subjectivities when the students react, respond and resist the given structure. One example is how joking practices emerge throughout the process of becoming an emotional worker, constructing these situations as comedic and harmless, an action where participants resist the structure and re-position themselves as active subjects, rather than objects of exposure, or

victims of the given circumstances. Through a poststructuralist perspective (see Butler 1990, 1997; Foucault 1980, 1988, 1990) I view these joking practices as practices that hide and dampen the vulnerabilities in these situations (and therefore they can be identified in this analysis), mobilising a process of normalisation and acceptance, constructing docile bodies. The emotional worker is here also produced through the flexibility that these issues require, where the unpredictability of clients' bodies and ways of being must be handled.

Communicative and responsible subjects also emerge here, taking responsibility for the learning process of one's classmates through communicative actions and through making one's body available for practice. Here, I argue, emotional *students* emerge through responsibilisation, making each other's learning possible – a process that is gendered. As Bredlöv (2016b) show in her study on how skin and spa therapy students position themselves as professionals through knowledge, a caring professional is constructed when skin and spa therapy students (self-) position. Here, a caring technology is set in motion when students learn to appreciate the pleasure of giving to such an extent that they can be left doing it without any control (see Fejes and Nicoll 2010; Foucault 1988; Skeggs 1997). These processes connect to wider discourses of femininity, and, as Skeggs argue (1997), the caring subject has to be the right kind of person, having attributes that connect to wider discourses of femininity and motherhood. In this study, the skin and spa therapy students are positioned and self-position as caring, responsible and relationally skilled with the ability of handling one's feelings, boosting each other's' learning processes through the interactions taking place in the training. Becoming an emotional student through issues surrounding bodies emerge here as inevitable. Thus, these caring, relationally skilled and responsible actions through which the emotional student is produced, are actions taking place without any control. This is a gendered process where students repeat and imitate femininity through controlling images (see Butler 1990). So, educational research on emotional labour is crucially important in relation to VET in order to map out the skills required for operating successfully in any vocation, and so that work, including relational aspects of work, are to be appropriately remunerated. In addition, emotional labour should also be acknowledged in other educational contexts since students also perform emotional labour when they operate as learners, as this study has shown. How might for example the ability of performing emotional labour in the classroom interplay in learning processes? Such aspects are important to outline in the development of various educational arrangements.

Furthermore, the process of becoming an emotional worker is, in this sphere, both enacted by the educational arrangement in itself (when students have to make their own bodies available for practice) and in relation to a future client. However, these should not be easily separated since they are both a part of the same process – the process of becoming an emotional worker of this sphere. The three issues surrounding the body, that emerged in the material, are practices where power is resisted and contested, and through the students' reactions and responses, struggles and resistances, norms about the emotional skin and spa therapist are then produced. It is therefore useful to think about how the students' experiences of receiving treatments and communicating their feelings are reflected in their future professional role.

Notes

1. Statistics Sweden is an administrative agency that provides statistics for decision-making, debate and research (http://www.scb.se/en_/About-us/).
2. *Intense Puls Light*, where laser is used to remove unwanted hair growth, visible blood vessels, pigmentations etc.

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